

Keep Pet Waste Out of Streams

When it rains, stormwater runs across land and picks up contaminants that can harm water quality in streams, lakes and the Missouri River. One of the common contaminants in stormwater runoff is pet waste.



What's the Problem?

When pet waste is left on the sidewalk or in the yard, it washes into storm drains and ditches. From there it heads straight to the local lakes and rivers, taking harmful bacteria with it.

Bacteria in pet waste can threaten the health of animals and people, especially children. People and animals that come into contact with pet waste are at risk

for getting parasites, roundworm, and bacterial infections.

When pet waste is washed into the waterways, the waste decays using up oxygen and sometimes releases ammonia. This combined with warm temperatures can kill fish and other aquatic life. Pet waste also contains nutrients that encourage excess weed and algae growth.

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What Can You Do?

Fortunately, pet owners can help prevent pet waste from entering storm drains, streams, waterways and the Missouri River.

1. Pick up pet waste from your yard. It is not a fertilizer.
2. Carry disposable bags while walking your dog to pick up and dispose of waste properly.
3. If you dispose of waste in the trash, be sure to wrap it carefully to avoid spillage during trash collection.
4. Flush pet waste down the toilet, so it can be treated at a Water Protection Facility.
5. Bury pet waste in your yard, at least 12 inches deep and cover with at least eight inches of soil to let it decompose slowly. Bury the waste in several different locations and keep it away from vegetable gardens.